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significant facility there a couple of years ago. And I think that we need to be a little bit clearer about what the necessity for this facility is on top of the money that we devoted out of General Fund dollars just, what, about a week ago. All of that is a little bit confusing to me and I think we ought to be a little bit more careful than what we seem to be inclined to be at the moment this afternoon.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Hilgert, you are next.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you, Madam President, members. I...let me be very clear, Senator Wickersham. I know you're alluding to the fact that perhaps if you adopt my amendment we're being irresponsible, perhaps maybe I'm trying to be irresponsible. I am not. What I'm saying, the irresponsible thing to do is when we came here we knew we were going to have somewhat of a surplus, whatever that is, and we were going to talk about tax cuts. Maybe we won't; maybe we will. But I did this amendment on this amendment to the bill because I don't think we should raise taxes. I think that's the wrong message to send. What did you do in the 90-day session? Well, we raised taxes. So I'm not necess...you know, that is exactly why I have this amendment. If my amendment is adopted, the specter of a tax increase is taken away and then Senator Thompson's bill or idea can rise or fall on its merits. Perhaps it's important enough that we adopt Senator Thompson's facility and perhaps redo something else elsewhere in the budget. I don't...I agree with you, Senator Wickersham, we should, you know, stay. We don't want to go into the red. It would be nice to send to the Governor a balanced budget. But one thing I absolutely do not want to do is to raise taxes. I think...I believe that my constituents and the people that I talk to sometimes have difficulty with state government, and I think that it would ruin or further erode credibility if we turn around and increase taxes. There are times to raise taxes. There are times not to raise taxes. With the surplus that we had and the different proposals we're trying to work with, I believe that Senator Thompson's...the youth confinement facility can stand on its own merits and take its rightful place in the budget. But to suggest that what I'm trying to do here is somewhat irresponsible, I beg to differ. I don't think it's